

EPI Update for Friday, September 3, 2010
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Recruiting begins for influenza surveillance sites**
- **Norovirus, Salmonella responsible for most foodborne outbreaks in 2007**
- **Pertussis activity in Western Iowa**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Recruiting begins for influenza surveillance sites

The Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network is looking for additional health care providers and schools to participate in surveillance activities for the 2010-2011 influenza season. Health care providers are asked to track total patients seen with influenza-like illness each week and total patients seen. Participants receive free influenza testing at the State Hygienic Laboratory for a sampling of patients each week. Health care providers asked to join special projects are often chosen from the list of surveillance network providers.

School nurses are also being asked to join the IISN this year. The goal is to survey approximately 10 percent of Iowa's school-age population, or about 75 schools.

All data reporting is completed online and a copy of the weekly flu report is sent to every site by email. Support with tracking is provided.

For more information or to enroll, contact Meg Harris at mharris@idph.state.ia.us or 515-281-7134. We appreciate all the help we get to keep track of influenza in Iowa.

Norovirus, Salmonella responsible for most foodborne outbreaks in 2007

In a newly released report, CDC researchers identified 1,097 foodborne disease outbreaks, which lead to 21,244 illnesses and 18 deaths in the United States during 2007. Although *Salmonella* and norovirus were the most common culprits for both outbreaks and illnesses, these numbers were down 8 percent and 15 percent respectively from the annual average reported from 2002 to 2006.

A single agent was identified in 64 percent of outbreaks, resulting in 73 percent of illnesses. A specific cause was not identified in 363 outbreaks. Delayed reporting of illness and outbreaks to public health officials, and inability to test food and cases, were the most common reasons for not being able to identify an etiology or food vehicle.

Salmonella was the causative agent in two of the three largest reported outbreaks in 2007. The food vehicles responsible were hummus (802 illnesses) and commercially-processed pot pies (401 illnesses and 3 deaths). Norovirus caused the second largest outbreak, which occurred at a conference hotel where food was responsible. For more information, visit

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5931a1.htm?s_cid=mm5931a1_w

The Iowa Administrative Code 641.1 states that outbreaks of any kind are immediately reportable. To report, call 800-362-2736. Timely investigation and reporting of foodborne outbreaks can provide public health and regulatory professionals with information to target control and prevention strategies so that others do not become ill.

Pertussis activity in Western Iowa

Over the last several weeks, the Council Bluffs Department of Public Health and Pottawattamie County Health Departments have been investigating several clusters of people having pertussis (whooping cough). Many of the cases have occurred in school aged children.

Pertussis can cause coughing spells so severe that it is difficult to eat, drink or breathe, especially in young children. The coughing fits occur more frequently at night, and are often followed by vomiting. Between spells, the person usually appears to be well. Adults, teens, and vaccinated children may have milder symptoms.

Pertussis can also lead to pneumonia, seizures, brain damage and death. Without treatment an infected person can spread the disease until 21 days after the start of the cough. However, five days of treatment with an appropriate antibiotic makes the patient no longer infectious.

Today the tetanus booster vaccine, Tdap, contains pertussis and provides the immunity needed for adolescents and adults. Even if you had a tetanus booster less than 10 years ago, you can receive a Tdap.

For more information about pertussis, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/pertussis.asp.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy holiday weekend!

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800-362-2736